

# **Bible for Life: *How to Study the Bible***

## ***CLASS 1: CONTEXT, CONTEXT, CONTEXT!***

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE CLASS**

The study of how to interpret the Bible is called \_\_\_\_\_.

Hermeneutics is both an \_\_\_\_\_ and a \_\_\_\_\_.

### **1.2 RESOURCES**

*How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* (Gordon Fee & Douglas Stuart)

*Living by the Book: The Art and Science of Reading the Bible* (Howard & William Hendricks)

*Basic Bible Interpretation* (Roy B. Zuck)

*The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Grant R. Osborne)

### **1.3 THE HOLY SPIRIT AND INTERPRETATION**

1 Corinthians 2:14-16 –

- Paul says two things about the natural man/unbeliever here:

1) The natural person does not \_\_\_\_\_ the things of the Spirit of God, because they are \_\_\_\_\_ to him.

2) The natural person is not able to \_\_\_\_\_ spiritual things, because they are spiritually \_\_\_\_\_.

- The Holy Spirit works to \_\_\_\_\_ the minds and hearts of believers in order to rightly understand, apply and embrace God's truth in the Bible.

Psalm 119:18, 34 –

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 –

### **1.4 CONTEXT**

- The most important word in Bible Study is \_\_\_\_\_

Example: Job 22:21

Example: 2 Samuel 15:29

Different Kinds of Context:

A. \_\_\_\_\_ Context – Where is the verse in the flow of the argument? How does the argument shape, limit and explain the verse? (Ex: Genesis 39:11-12)

B. \_\_\_\_\_ Context – When, to whom and why was the book written?  
(Ex: Kings vs Chronicles / Galatians)

- 1) Authorship – who wrote it?
- 2) Date – when was it written?
- 3) Audience – to whom was it written?
- 4) Purpose – why did the author write it?

C. \_\_\_\_\_ Context – How do the surrounding landmarks or topography of the land impact interpretation? (Ex: 1 Samuel 16:1-2; cf. 15:34)

- 1) Does the text mention any geographical features?
- 2) What was the terrain like?
- 3) What features of the topography are unique? Are any mentioned in the text?
- 4) What was the weather like?
- 5) Where is this town in relation to other places mentioned in the text?
- 6) Did any major roads pass through this town? If so, from where, to where, and why?
- 7) How big is the town/city/location?
- 8) Was this town famous for anything?
- 9) Is this town known by any other names in the Bible?
- 10) Does this town show up in any other Bible stories? If so, what's the significance?

D. \_\_\_\_\_ Context – How does the cultural situation in which this book was written and/or the story takes place impact interpretation? (Ex: Esther)

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) \_\_\_\_\_

Questions to ask:

- a) How much Scripture did the person who wrote this passage have?
- b) Where does this passage fit into the scheme of “Progressive Revelation”?
- c) What other texts (in OT and NT) relate to this passage?

## ***CLASS 2: OBSERVATION***

### **2.1 TWO IMPORTANT TERMS**

\_\_\_\_\_ : Reading a meaning \_\_\_\_\_ of a text

\_\_\_\_\_ : Reading a meaning \_\_\_\_\_ a text

Example: Jeremiah 29:11 –

### **2.2 THREE STEPS TO EXEGESIS**

Three main steps of exegesis:

Step One: \_\_\_\_\_ : What do I \_\_\_\_\_?

Step Two: \_\_\_\_\_ : What does it \_\_\_\_\_?

Step Three: \_\_\_\_\_ : How does it \_\_\_\_\_ me?

This is the \_\_\_\_\_ of Bible Study.

### **2.3 OBSERVATION: WHAT DO I SEE?**

The goal of observation is to make you a better \_\_\_\_\_ of the Bible.

Observation asks the following questions:

\_\_\_\_\_?: Who wrote it? Who did they write it to? Who are the major/minor characters?

\_\_\_\_\_?: What are the key terms? What terms are repeated? What are the major events? What figures of speech are used? What's the reason the author wrote this? What are the contexts? From what perspective is it written? What does the author focus on? What is left out?

\_\_\_\_\_?: Where does this take place? Are any other places mentioned?

\_\_\_\_\_?: When did the author write? When does this story take place?

\_\_\_\_\_?: How does the text say what it says?

Helpful Hints:

- 1) Read \_\_\_\_\_, emphasizing different words/parts
- 2) Read thoughtfully, patiently, repeatedly, prayerfully

Hendricks (*Living by the Book*, chs 19-23) gives six things to look for:

- 1) Things that are emphasized
- 2) Things that are \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Things that are \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) Things that are alike
- 5) Things that are unlike
- 6) Things that are true to life

## **2.4 PRACTICE – 1 SAMUEL 16:1-13**

Observations: